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ABSTRACT

This coursebook contains materials for a course to help participants in a workplace literacy project put together a solid presentation that they can deliver with confidence. The course's stated goals are as follows: to enable participants to prepare interesting and informative presentations, use visual aids to enhance presentation, deliver presentations in a lively manner, overcome nervousness, and feel confident of their abilities as a public speaker. Materials are provided for four sessions to be presented over 3 weeks. Topics covered in the first are the following: characteristics of good and bad presentations, the communication triangle, the planning stage (purpose of speech, audience, what one knows and what one needs to know), and generating content. A planning worksheet is provided. Session two focuses on putting the presentation together; it covers the writing stage from outline to presentation, conclusions and introductions, and visual aids. Topics in the third session are as follows: the delivery stage, practicing the presentation, preparation, and keys to a strong presentation. During the fourth session, students deliver their presentations in class. (YLB)

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UN PASO
ADELANTE
Mejores Habilidades
Mejor Comunicacion
Mejores Oportunidades
Dedicados en Mejorar la Comunicacion acerca del Cuidado de la Salud
Colaboracion de New Mexico State University y Memorial Medical Center

Effective Presentations

Communicating in Health Care Settings

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Effective Presentations

An offering of Step *Ahead:*

A Partnership for Improved Health Care Communication between Memorial Medical Center and New Mexico State University

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As a demonstration project, we are eager to share these materials with others who are engaged in not-for-profit literacy work. If you would like to use our materials, please write for permission to:

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Session Map
Effective Presentations

Week One

Session 1:

Course Goals, p. 2
Characteristics of Good and Bad Presentations, p. 3
Communication Triangle, p. 4
Brainstorm topics
Read Getting Started: The Planning Stage, p. 5
Do the Planning Worksheet, p. 7
Do Generating Content, p. 9
Assignments:
    Finish Planning Worksheet
    Read "Putting Your Presentation Together," p. 10-14

Session 2:

Discuss reading
• "Putting Your Presentation Together," p. 10-14
Outline your presentation
Assignments:
    Read "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words," p. 15
    Read "Polishing Your Presentation," 16-17
    Write your presentation
    Collect and develop visual aids

Week Two

Session 3:

Discuss reading
• "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words, " p. 15
• "Polishing Your Presentation," 16-17
Peer reviews
Discuss "The Big Day," 18-21
Answer questions on p. 18
Assignments:
    Practice presentation at home

Session 4:

Give Presentations

Introduction

Speaking in front of a crowd is never easy. If you are like most people, the minute you even think of getting up in front of a crowd, your mouth gets dry and your palms get wet. Your heart races and it feels like your stomach is trying to escape out your throat.

Fortunately, the condition is not fatal. Taking the time to learn a few techniques can help you build the confidence you need to become a polished presenter. This class will show you how to plan a presentation that is interesting and informative. Once you have an interesting framework, you will learn how to fill in the details. Then we will work on making a talk lively by using visual aids or handouts. And you will get to practice your skills at the end of class when you present your speech to your fellow students.

As you work through the next few pages, you will learn how to put together a solid presentation that you can deliver with confidence. There is no need to let panic take over. You can trade the panic for feelings of confidence and satisfaction, because you know you have worthwhile things to say and you know that getting up before a group is not that big a deal.

Making Effective Presentations
Course Goals

At the end of this course, participants should be able to:

- Prepare interesting and informative presentations
- Use visual aids to enhance presentations
- Deliver presentations in a lively manner
- Overcome nervousness
- Feel confident of their abilities as a public speaker
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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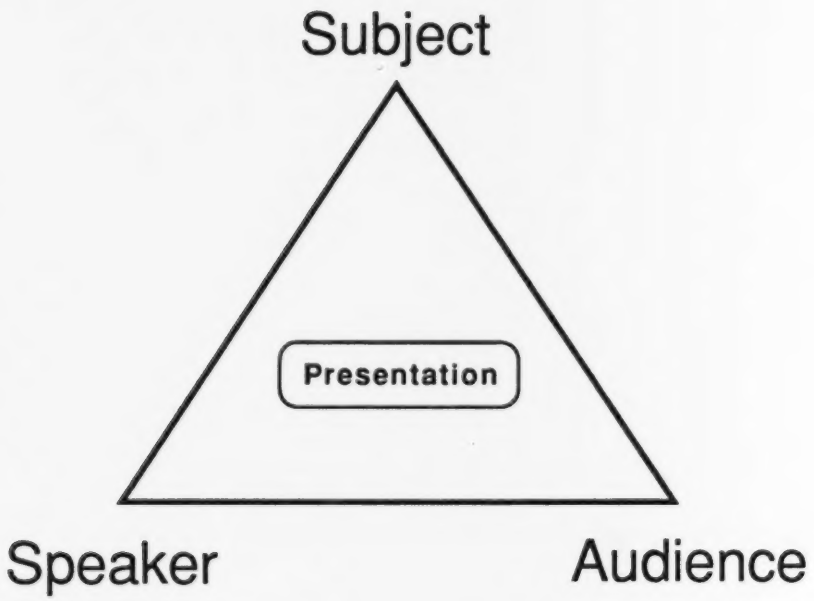
Characteristics of Good and Bad Presentations

Good Presentations	Bad Presentations

The Communication Triangle



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Getting Started: The Planning Stage

Obviously, you can't just sit down and write a speech. First you need to find out what you want the speech to accomplish and who will be listening.

Purpose: Why am I doing this?

Interesting presentations are those with strong goals or purposes. Purpose lies behind everything we do when we communicate, whether in writing, in conversation, or before a group.

A strong sense of purpose will help you make decisions about your presentation based on your goals:

- Are you going to inform the audience about a topic that is new to them?
- Do you need to build team spirit or cooperative attitudes?
- Do you need to persuade your audience to follow your suggestions for hospital policy?
- Do you need to teach (and does your audience actually need to learn) to do something?

Try to think in terms of action: What you are doing? Move away from thinking about *topic* toward thinking about *behavior*.

Listeners: Who is my audience?

In addition to thinking about what your purpose is, you need to think about your audience.

- Who will be listening to you?
- Do they already agree with what you are saying or do you need to convince them to agree?
- Will they be hostile to your ideas or mad about having to attend the presentation?
- Will you be wasting people's time by having them attend? What is the payoff for the audience?
- Do they have the same professional knowledge that you do?
- Are there turf issues involved?

The more you know about your audience, the more you can prepare. Preparing means developing a *strategy* for a successful presentation.

Successful presentations rely on making an appropriate appeal to the character of the audience. You need to be something of a psychologist--imagining how people think and feel and then appealing to their thoughts and feelings in ways that bring about their cooperation. Sometimes you can do this by beating up on people--insisting they do things your way because you are the boss. More often, you appeal to

people through extending an open hand, by saying "Let's cooperate" or "Let's work together to get this thing done."

Speaker: Who am I ?

Speaking is performing. It is being on stage. When you are on stage, you must think of yourself as an actor. You need to be entertaining; you need to be animated; you need to be *alive*.

We don't enjoy dead speakers. We don't enjoy monotone voices, frozen faces, or deadpan deliveries. We want action. We want interaction. We want theater.

The speaker who is convinced that the audience is uninterested tends to be timid and apologetic about taking up the audience's valuable time. After a while the audience will come to agree with her.

Your attitude makes a difference. Think about how you want to be perceived by your audience:

- Do you have a sense of humor? Are you glad to be up front?
- Do you have strong beliefs? Can you be honest and open about them?
- What does your audience already know about you?
- What can you do to show them you possess good will toward them?
- Are you an authority? Does your audience know this?
- What bridges can you build to your audience?
- What can you reveal about yourself?

Subject: What do I know and what do I need to know?

To give to good speech, you need to know enough about your topic to be comfortable with it. It undermines your confidence when you feel you don't really understand what you are talking about.

Look again at the communication triangle. Notice the left side suggests what *you* know about your topic. The right side suggests what *your audience* knows about your topic. Figure out what the differences are between these two understandings.

First you should figure out what you already know. Start by jotting down information you have about the topic. Write down any questions you have. These questions show you areas you need to research.

Then figure out what your audience knows. Are there ways you can make use of what they already know? Can you anticipate what they want to know? What can they really use of what you have to offer?

Once you decide what you need to know, then you can decide *where* to do your research. You may need to go the the library, or to interview several authorities on the topic, or to find in information in professional books. You may need to talk with other people or observe a working group in action.

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Planning Worksheet

Decide what topic you are going to use for the presentation in this class and fill out the Planning Worksheet.

What is the subject of my presentation?

Purpose: Why am I doing this?

- Why am I giving this presentation?
- What do I want my listeners to do?
- What is the most important thing I want my audience to remember?

Listeners: Who is my audience?

- Who is my audience?
- What does the audience know and how does the audience feel about the subject?
- How will listeners use the information I present to them?
- What is my audience's style? Can I adjust to it?

Speaker: Who am I?

- What am I like?
- What do they think of me?
- Do they trust me? Do I need to establish my good will?
- Do I need to establish my authority?

Planning Worksheet (page 2)

Subject: What do I have to say about this topic?

- What is interesting about this topic?

- What do I know that they don't know?

- Why will my audience want to hear this speech?

Subject: What do I need to know?

First, jot down what you *already* know about the topic:

Write down any questions you have. These questions show you areas you need to research.

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Generating Content

Several strategies are useful for generating ideas about what you should cover in your presentation. **Brainstorming** means simply listing everything that comes to mind about your topic in any order that comes to mind. The technique should free your creative side form your critical side.

Clustering involves drawing connected bubbles of information, in a kind of neural network. Clusters of related ideas should emerge, which in turn, suggest a structure for your presentation.

The **Five W's and the Lonely H**–Who, What, Where, When, Why, and little How–suggest what everyone wants to know about every topic. Using them as a reminder can help you think about what to include.

Choose one of these strategies and work through your topic in the space below.

Putting Your Presentation Together: The Writing Stage

Creating a rough outline

Once you have planned your presentation and gathered the information you need, it is time to start organizing it. Don't worry about deciding on a formal introduction yet. That can come later.

Start by stating your purpose. If someone came up and asked you what you were doing, what one sentence would you say when you answer? That sentence would be your purpose statement (or topic sentence).

Now you need to support that purpose statement. Decide on 3 or 4 main points that will structure your presentation.

Here is an example. Suppose you need to give a presentation to the new employees about incident reports. Your topic sentence might be:

Correctly filling out incident reports helps protect you and the hospital.

Now you need to think about what you should tell a new employee. Your main points might be:

I. Introduce incident reports.
II. Show why they are important to the individual.
III. Show how they protect the hospital.
III. Explain how to fill them out.

Expanding your outline

Now you have a rough outline. You know your topic and what main points you will use to support that topic. Some of these main points will need to be expanded on.

You will need to tell your audience information, like when it is appropriate to fill out an incident report and where the reports are found.

Your audience will also probably want to know why incident reports are important. You can include some of the major reasons:

- An incident report alerts people that something unusual has happened.
- It puts in writing your view of exactly what happened.
- It informs managers of potential risks to patients and staff.
- It acknowledges that professionals sometimes make mistakes and are not afraid to report them.

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- It reminds the people involved of the details of an incident if it goes to court several years from now.

You may want to end with how a good incident report should be filled out.

Your expanded outline with your topic sentence now looks like this:

Correctly filling out incident reports helps protect you and the hospital.

I. Introduce incident reports
   - A. When are they filled out?
   - B. Where are the forms found?
   - C. What purposes do they serve?

II. Show why incident reports are important to the individual
   - A. It puts in writing your view of exactly what happened.
   - B. It acknowledges that professionals sometimes make mistakes and are not afraid to report them.
   - C. It reminds the people involved of the details of an incident if it goes to court several years from now.

III. Show how incident reports protect the hospital
   - A. An incident report alerts people that something unusual has happened.
   - B. It informs managers of potential risks to patients and staff.
   - C. It allows the hospital to identify patterns of risk and take corrective action.
   - D. A written record of an unusual occurrence that puts the hospital at legal risk gives the hospital attorney needed information.

IV. Explain how to fill out incident reports
   - A. Tell where people go wrong.
   - B. Be objective.
   - C. Fill them out completely.

Write an expanded outline for your topic. Use the back of a page if necessary.

From Outline to Presentation

You need to decide what form you want your speech to be in. Do you feel more comfortable writing out the entire speech so you know exactly what you want to say? Or do you want to use just an outline of your topic, main points and the evidence for the main points? Or would you like to write the important sentences on notecards and use the note cards to prompt you as you talk? Do you want to speak from a set of visuals? Any of theses strategies work; it depends on what you are comfortable with.

List the advantages and disadvantages of each approach:

	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Write out the entire speech.		
2. Present from your outline.		

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From Outline to Presentation (page 2)

	Advantages	Disadvantages
3. Use a list of 6 or 8 keywords.		
4. Use notecards with each main idea or important detail.		
5. Speak from a set of visuals.		

Conclusions and Introductions

Your conclusion includes a summary of the main points that you have made. This is important because it is harder to keep track of the main points in a speech. When someone reads something, she can skim over it to remind herself of the main points. When she is listening to a speech she can't look back. As a speaker, you need to remind your audience about the main points you have made to help them follow you. The best place to do that is in the conclusion.

Things to do in your conclusion

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-
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-
-

You may want to write the introduction after you have written the rest of the speech. Then you know exactly what you are going to say. You've also had some extra time to think about the question you are going to answer, the clever story you might use to get things started, or the quote that applies to your topic. All three of these ideas are good ways to start a presentation.

Try to avoid starting, "Today I am going to tell you about such and such..." Chances are the audience has heard many speeches that start that way. There are better ways to start. But do let the audience know what is coming and why.

Things to do in your introduction:

-
-
-
-
-

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A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

Pictures, graphs, and slides can save you a lot of words and they spice up a presentation. Why try to explain what an incident report looks like when you can use an overhead to help you get your point across?

Handouts are very useful because they help your audience follow the points you are making. When they have to fill out an incident report, they can simply look back at the handout. Handouts can also encourage listener involvement. That's how we use them in this course--so you can't just sit there. You need to think, talk and write in your book.

Ask yourself what sort of handout would help the audience follow your presentation, keep notes or remember material? Can you present striking data or figures? What can you display rather than say?

Types of visual aids

- flowcharts and diagrams
- key points
- data tables, graphs, or budgets
- provocative questions
- cartoons
- copies of the procedure or document you are talking about
- examples of the equipment you are discussing

On designing strong visuals

- Keep it simple.
- Keep lists short–seven items maximum
- Keep lettering large--you should be able to read your visual if you place it on the floor and look down at it.
- Make it professional–learn to use computer tools to produce quality visuals.
- Make the visual do the work–if there is an important figure, bold it; draw an arrow to the key step in the process; circle the projected profit with a bold highlighter
- Don't read the visual to the audience--they can do that faster than you can.
- Make the visual reinforce or emphasize what you say.

Write down several different types of visual aids that you will include with your presentation.

Polishing the Presentation: the Delivery Stage

Think about bad presentations you have attended. Too often, speakers simply read what they have prepared. But speaking is not reading. If your audience could read the text of your presentation and understand it all, then you might as well go ahead and give them a paper copy and forget the presentation. People can read faster than you can speak, so why waste their time? Do you like to be read to?

Let's assume you can do things with speaking that you can't do with writing. Imagine how a spoken presentation can be different from a written one. Think about how it can be made personal and interactive. Think about how it can be humorous, lively, and spontaneous. Think about how a spoken presentation allows you to let people get close to you, to see how you think and feel.

You need to get in touch with the ways that speaking is different from reading and writing.

Speaking	Writing

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Practicing Your Presentation

Practicing your speech aloud is the best way to polish your delivery. That way you can get used to hearing your voice. Think about the following tips as you practice:

- Practice your presentation out loud several times.
- Be energetic about your presentation.
- Keep your sentences short.
- Vary your tone of voice.
- Avoid speaking too fast.
- Pay attention to how often you say "uhm."
- Watch yourself in a mirror.
- Make eye contact.
- Get friend or family to be a practice audience.
- Practice using your visual aids.
- Include humorous remarks.
- Consider what size room you will be in. Should you speak more loudly?

Preparing for the Big Day

Now it is time to deliver your speech. Here are a few last questions for you to consider to make the big day go more smoothly. Answer the following questions:

- Where will I stand? Where will the audience sit? How will I arrange the room?
- Do I know how to work the microphone?
- What will I do as my audience enters the room?
- How should I begin?
- What should I do with my hands?
- What should I do with my eyes?
- Are there amusing stories, or scenarios, or anecdotes I could use?
- What questions will I ask to get the audience involved?
- How should I end?

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What Are the Keys to a Strong Presentation?

Every one is nervous when they stand up to make a presentation. This is why people hate public speaking; they feel those butterflies in their stomach and they decide they don't like it. Those butterflies are useful though. When you make a public presentation, you need the extra energy that those butterflies give you. Energy will make you sound confident and authoritative. It will also make you speak loudly enough to be heard by the people in the last row.

The best antidote to nerves is a strong presentation. Try the following strategies. you will feel in control and comfortable with your audience.

Talk to people as they come into the room: Introduce yourself, chat, get them and you warmed up by beginning with personal interaction.

Don't let your fear take over: If you haven't done a lot of public presentations you may be nervous and frightened. Don't be surprised if your hands or voice shakes a bit. Don't worry about those butterflies in your stomach; they will settle down as you start talking. Take a couple of deep breaths. This will help harness those butterflies. It is a surprise to many speakers that they feel very nervous and think they are conveying a horrible image, while the audience sees someone who is interested and excited about her topic.

Encourage interaction: You can invite people to ask questions or to offer information as you go along. You can say "How many of you have filled out incident reports?" (Wait for hands.) "How many of you *enjoy* filling them out?" (Wait for laughter and no hands and express surprise.) If you know people or feel comfortable, you can challenge audience members: "You seem to disagree with me on this point, Fred." Changing your footing from formal presentation to conversational interaction can really loosen up your presentation and get people actively involved. Of course, it can also lead you off into diversions or arguments or one-sided conversations with a single audience member, so stay in control.

Keep track of time: It is common but unforgivable for someone to use all the time but only get halfway through a presentation. Practicing should allow you to avoid this. A rule of thumb is that 8 double-spaced pages takes 20 minutes to deliver. Don't try to cram too much in. If you have too much to say, write it up and distribute it. Then use your presentation to highlight as you skip the details. Plan time to tell stories or to interact with the audience.

Don't spend too much of your time introducing: You want to be sure you get to the important stuff. Usually, your time is limited. If not, you should still be careful about taking too much time from your listeners. Get off to a brisk start.

Don't read your presentation: Enough said.

Use your visuals: You can use visuals–foils, overheads, or whatever you call them–to control your nerves, to remember what you have to say, and to direct your audience's attention to your presentation rather than yourself. You can speak very naturally while you and the audience look at a projected image. You can point to key data, identify steps in a process, or introduce some humor. The process of changing foils lets you do something with your hands, too.

Give yourself positive messages Expect to be a brilliant speaker and avoid dwelling on disaster scenarios. Everyone who has to make a presentation can come up with a disaster scenario, a scene when everything that can go wrong will go wrong: *You stand up to start your speech you realize you've forgotten your visual aids, your worst enemy is in the room, your dress splits down the middle spontaneously, you get so nervous that you drop your plate of spaghetti on your boss' head*...You get the picture. While it is good to anticipate problems that you may have, you should do that well in advance. Thinking about disasters before you speak can only make you too nervous to continue. Remind yourself that you have interesting and important things to say!

Look at your audience: A speaker who keeps her head down and reads her presentation in a monotone is boring. If looking at your audience makes you too nervous, however, you don't have to look directly at anyone. Sometimes looking just over the top of people's heads lets you give the impression that you are making eye contact.

Find sympathetic people in the audience: Find your friend, or supervisor, or the interested listener and talk to those people. If you can't see their faces, imagine a person you would like to talk to. Be prepared; many people in an audience look almost bored as they listen to the presenter. They may not laugh at your jokes or answer your questions because it takes time to warm them up. Don't let that rattle you.

Imagine all the people in the room naked: The idea is to make the other people look sort of ridiculous so they won't be so frightening. This technique may work for you; it makes some people laugh.

Now you are all set to go. Remember your attitude is very important. If you believe that you have something interesting to say and that the audience will benefit from hearing you, you are half way home.

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